The Bookshelf.

By DELTA.

BOOKSHELF FEUILLETON.

A Short "Life of Edward the Seventh."

A PUBLICATION that loyalists of every class and creed will gratefully welcome is Mr. Everleigh Nash's "Life of King Edward the Seventh," which is to be issued almost immediately.

Dr. William Gordon-Stables—Obit. June, 1910.

At Twyford, Berkshire, recently died Dr. William Gordon Stables, R.N., most popularly known, perhaps, as a writer of boys' books. Dr. Gordon-Stables, who was seventy years of age, at the time of his death, has been an indefatigable writer for the last twenty-seven years. Formerly in the Royal Navy, he was invalided on half-pay, after nine years' service. A great lover of birds and animals, he devoted both time and money to their protection, his nature studies showing him perfectly acquainted with their structure, habits, and habitat. His contributions to medical science and hygiene include "Popular Medicine and Hygiene, 7 volumes, "Health upon Wheels," "Rota Vitae," "Cycling for Health," and "People's A.B.C. Guide to Health," etc. His works in serial or book form number no fewer than 150. Though it is over a quarter of a century since he became a professional writer, none knew better how to adapt himself to modern requirements, as his admirable articles for the youth of both sexes, in last year's "Empire Annual," and more recently in "The Boys' Own Paper," show. Both modern hygienic science and youth have sustained a great loss in Dr. Gordon-Stables, who was ever deeply sensible of the talent entrusted to him as guardian of the public health, and as a mentor.

A Notable Survival.

That unconventional book, "The Martyrdom of Man," by Winwood Reade, nephew of the novelist Charles Reade, has lately gone into an eighteenth edition. It was of its author that his uncle once said that he was "heir to considerable estates and gifted with genius, but he did not live long enough to inherit the one or to mature the other." Winwood Reade wrote many books of fiction and travel, but only the volume mentioned above has survived.

New Silhouettes of the French Romantics.

For the last twenty years or more, Madame Duclaux (A. Mary F. Robinson) has been one of the most distinguished interpreters of French literary genius for English readers, and of English genius for the French. She has been the friends of Taine, Gaston, Paris and Anatole France, and M. France is said to have drawn one of his heroines from her. She is, above all, as the London "Nation" says, one of the happiest and most imaginative critical writers of her day. A writer, in "Current Literature" for May, contributes some extracts, and comments on what Madame Duclaux, in her new book of essays, felicitously terms "snapshots" of the leading French Romantics, which makes exceedingly eclectic reading, and some of which we have reproduced for those of our readers who have admired or have been influenced by this school.

Rousseau—"The Man from the Alps."

The Romantic Revolution in France occupied almost the entire nineteenth century, and was not confined to France. Jean Jacques Rosseau was its great precursor. "When the world spirit desires to fertilise the ideas of a people, there is no great difference in the proceeding from Nature's ordinary plan, which is always the introduction of a germ from without," writes Madame Duclaux. Into the Paris of 1750, then, that "world of reason and synthesis, of systems and formulas," the world-spirit introduced Jean-Jacques. "Rosseau's genius," continues this writer, "was made up of what was lacking in his life. For instance, he who knew neither the fulness of love or equal marriage, and whose every sense was starved in his wretched garret in Paris and elsewhere, gave to the world the most enchanting visions of life as it might be were all things equal. His was the very voice of Mother Nature—querulous, tender, anxiously scolding, yet inspired. He loved much, and he was much. No man was ever so unforgettably himself as the absurd, detestable, delectable Jean-Jacques." Madame de Stael and Benjamin Constant were also Swiss. Werther came from Germany, and Ossian from Scotland.

Chateaubriand, the Real Inaugurator.

While Rosseau was the great precursor of the Romantic movement in France, Chateaubriand was its real inaugurator. "Atala" and "Rene" were both written during his exile in London. With the publication, in 1802, of his "Genie du Christianisme," the Romantic Movement was really inaugurated.

Victor Hugo and George Sand.

Madame Duclaux' snapshot of Victor Hugo, the King of the French Romantics, proves very clearly that she is not a believer in the Gribble contention. In a felicitous flashlight she shows Victor Hugo "the enfant sublime," running wild in an old Paris garden, gay, dreaming, happily mothered, in a light that illumines his whole career. We regret exceedingly that space forbids details of this picture. George Sand is depicted by Madame Duclaux as the Queen of the Romantics, leaning on the arm of de Musset, full of passion, genius, youth and fame. Only the Romantic period, says Madame Duclaux, could have produced such a situation as existed, or such a set of letters as passed between George Sand and de Musset. "But the difference between George Sand and de Musset lay in the fact that while de Musset went under as the result of his passion for George Sand, she transformed her passion into action, finding in it a principle of moral growth." In exchange for a man, or men, this great novelist discovered humanity, and became the chief apostle of the humanitarian movement in Europe. The misguided young woman of Venice had developed into the kindest, wisest, and most lovable old woman in Paris.

NO, THEY HAVE NOT FALLEN OUT!

Sainte Beuve and Honore de Balzac

In the great struggle between romanticism and classicism, Sainte Beuve fought on the side of the romantics. But Madame Hugo's sympathy, for obvious reasons, waning with the movement, together with the rupture of their friendship, opened his eyes to necessity, which he viewed, not only with the eyes of a man of science, but with something of the grim faith of a Calvinist or a Jansenist. Despite the instinctive feud that existed between Balzac and Sainte Beuve, it is the opinion of Madame Duclaux that of all the intellectual giants produced by the romantic revolution, these two had most in common. Each, she declares, had an insatiable curiosity, a similar power, a refinement of psychology in searching the dark places of the soul; each followed the psychologist's instinct, which classes men rather by their temperament than by their actions. Whereas nearly all the men of 1830 were lyrical and sentimental, Balzac and Sainte Beuve were intellectual and social. Each of them sought to surprise the secret in the heart of an individual, and yet was concerned with that psychological unit considered as a factor in the history of society. In short, the consideration of "the general interests of society" distinguish both Balzac and Sainte Beuve from the true romantics of their time.

A False Romantic.

Baudelaire is revealed as composite in his attitude towards romanticism, though it pleased him to write himself down as a romantic poet. Baudelaire is said to have missed immortality through perverseness. Women he included in the negligible horde of inferior creatures, of whom the lowest was George Sand.

Comte Arthur de Gobineau.

A snapshot of Gobineau, Prophet, brings our rechauffe to a close. Le Gobinisme is to a great extent responsible for nationalism, militarism, anti-semitism, and all the cultus of domination in the France of to-day. In Maurice Barres is its chief disciple: Anatole France its great opponent. "M. France, whom the nations delight to honour, but whom they might quite conceivably have summoned in the police courts (like Socrates), or shot to death on a barricade—had things been just a little otherwise."

"Mr. Polly."

Mr. H. G. Wells' new story, "Mr. Polly," is written in the vein of "Kipps" and "Love and Mr. Lewisham," and is more amusing than either. It is a recital of the woes of a draper's assistant doomed to commercialism, when he feels that he was cut out for a life of ease and culture. His matrimonial venture proves a blank; also, Mr. Polly on things in general is simply irresistible, and we cordially recommend it as a book no one should miss.

"The Testing of Thi-Tam."

This is an idyllic Chinese love story, told with consummate art by Miriam Harry, in "Le Petit Journal," Paris, and has been translated by Helen E. Meyer. Here is the story in bare outline. After the rice is sown on the swamps, miradors, or railed platforms, are erected at a distance of one hundred feet. On these miradors watchers are stationed to guard the growing rice, from the period of its sowing to the time of harvest. Once installed on the mirador, no guard may descend until the harvest. In the rice fields of Annam young lovers are sent to watch the fields, each alone, to note the mysteries of spring, to watch the growing rice, and await their deliverance. Should they have kept faith, the names of the two strong in endurance are inscribed on the scrolls of Virtue, the tablet of the Pagoda, and the Government of the village pays for their wedding feast. Thi-Tam and Nay, the heroine and hero of this exquisite story, stood this test, indeed, Thi-Tam sacrificed her life to it. For when the elders of the village came to set her free, "they found Thi-Tam lying on her straw mat, dead, covered with a silken kite—Nay's Kite—which he had sent forth from his mirador, when the signal he had arranged as a means of communication had not been responded to. "The story is as pure and as sweet as the story of Romeo and Juliet, and hangs like a new and dainty miniature in the gallery of literature." Mrs. Helen E. Meyer is highly to be congratulated on the felicity of her translation, which, it is plainly evident, has been to her a labour of love.

The July "Life."

"Life" for July has reached us, too late to give an extended review this week. But we cannot forbear giving our readers Mr. Arthur Guiterman's "Impudent Interviews: Jack London," which previously appeared in N.Y. "Life." Here it is:—

In the hurly and the burly of the Early Pleistocene,
Ere the Adamistic Dynasty began,
I went roaming through the gloaming with my little forest queen,
Not a Monkey, nor an Evoluted Man.
Oh, we teased the Woolly Bear,
And we pulled the Mammoth's hair,
And we took the Snarly Tiger by the paw.
Though I've lived an awful lot
I have never quite forgot
Human Nature as I knew it in the Raw.

I'm a Railer and a Trailer and a Sailor of the Seas,
(In my Present Incarnation, let me add),
Anarchistic, atavistic, pessimistic, if you please,
For I've roved around the world and found it bad.
In the cold Alaskan camps,
On the road with grimy tramps,
On the ocean in the howling of the gale,
I have played a fitting part,
And I learned the writer's art
By inventing lies to keep me out of gaol.

If you're burning to be earning over seven cents a word,
You must cultivate the brutal and the Rude.
Write a story that is gory; milder matter is absurd,
For the Public has no taste for Baby Food.
Give 'em Cruelty and Vice,
Give 'em Misery on Ice,
Give 'em rough-and-tumble, marlin-spike and gun;
Give 'em grafters to wake the dead,
Make it Grisly, Ripe, and Red,
For they like their Mental Beefsteak underdone.

BITS FROM THE NEWEST BOOKS.

Unnecessary Necessities!

"Anyone can do without necessities; it's luxuries one misses."—"Calico Jack," by Horace W. C. Newte.

Supplicating Eve.

"All women come to their knees at last. It is their best attitude."—"The Scarlet Kiss." Gertie de S. Wentworth-James. T. Werner Laurie. 6s.

The Happy Medium.

"To be commonplace is to be happy in life; it's the ups and downs that are so wearying."—"The Silly Season," by J. F. G. Elkin Mathews. 2s 6d net.

Cakes and the Man.

"Unless a man cares for cakes his nature is minus that one touch of semi-feminine gentleness which a woman wants when she is in the humour to fall in love."—"Glorious Man," by Gertie de S. Wentworth-James. C. H. White. 1s net.

A Definition of "Nap."

"The perpetual foolish variation of the permutations and combinations of two-and-fifty cards taken five at a time, and the meagre surprises and excitements that ensue." "The History of Mr Polly," by H. G. Wells. Nelson. 2s.

New Light on History.

It has been said by Napoleon that Wellington was surprised at Brussels. It is not true. He had news of the advance of the French army quite in time, and having given his orders and appointed his headquarters at Quatre Bras he retired to his bedroom. Shortly after an officer arrived from Charleroi with the news that that town had been taken by the French. It was thought right to waken the Duke and bring the officer to him. He jumped up and went to a table where his map was lying. "Ah," said he, "taken Charleroi; I daresay they have," and then, pausing a short time, he added, "Well, I have done all that man can do, let what will happen; I shall be at Quatre Bras to-morrow